

[Share](#) [Report Abuse](#) [Next Blog»](#)
[Create Blog](#) [Sign In](#)

The Brown Study

The expression "brown study" is a fourteenth century British term that started out meaning a dark melancholy mood, but later came to mean a state of thinking deeply about something.


[Subscribe in a reader](#)

Friday, December 2, 2011

Subscribe via email

Subscribe to The Brown Study by Email

About Me



Tim Brown

I recently completed two terms on the Parks, Beaches and Recreation Commission for the city of Newport Beach, CA. In addition, I currently serve as the President of the Civic Affairs Council for the Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce. I am also, the Immediate Past President of the Newport Beach Sunrise Rotary Club. I hold the rank of Full Professor at Riverside City College where I teach a course called Critical Reading as Critical Thinking. In addition, I hold a Faculty Seat on the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. I am the Principal for Tim Brown and Associates, Educational Consultants. I am the author of The Prentice Hall Textbook Reader and currently writing the Content Area Reader's Handbook due for publication in January of 2012. I coached college baseball for 13 years and remain an avid follower of college athletics particularly, at my alma mater, Arizona State University. I have traveled extensively throughout the world and have set foot on every continent except for Antarctica. One of my many hobbies is playing supernumary roles in opera. Some productions in which I have had roles include, Carmen, Tosca, and Don Giovanni.

[View my complete profile](#)

"Open Space" and the Banning Ranch

Yesterday at the Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce Governmental Affairs Committee meeting, our guests were George Basye of Aera Energy and Rewdy Holstein of Brook Street to provide our committee with an update of the Banning Ranch Development Plan. The appearance was timely in that the "public comment" period for the Environmental Impact Report on the plan has closed and the report should come before the Newport Beach Planning Commission in January and then on to the City Council.

As most citizens of Newport Beach know, the General Plan Update approved in 2006 provided for two uses of the property. One was that the property remains completely 100% open space, or the city shall consider a development proposal for 70% of the property to remain open space and 30% for development and amenities. In order for the project to remain 100% open space, it would have to be purchased by a group committed to that effort such as the Banning Ranch Conservancy. The City of Newport Beach has no plans to purchase the 400 acre property.

The open space alternative is the impetus for this post. What exactly is "open space?" According to the Institute of Natural Resources at Oregon State University open space is, "an area of land that is valued for natural processes and wildlife, for agricultural and sylvan production, for active and passive recreation, and providing other public benefits." This definition works for me: without knowing anything else, I would support the Banning Ranch property to be maintained as 100% open space. But, you see, I do know something else. I have been on the property. I have seen the condition of this property as it stands today with my own eyes.

As we all know, there is nothing natural about oil production. There have been over 400 oil wells drilled on this property since 1943. To look at the ranch from an aerial photograph you see a mosaic of dirt roads carved in to the terrain for access to these wells with oil rig debris strewn along the shoulders. The water resources have been polluted with chemicals and other toxins making it uninhabitable for most forms of wildlife. Much of the native species, such as the coastal sages, have been driven out by invasive species much more tolerant to the harsh conditions which exist there today. The property is too dangerous to be enjoyed by any member the public for passive or active recreational use. In short, the Banning Ranch property is not open space now.

To become open space, the property will require extensive mitigation measures with an estimated cost of 30 million dollars or more. That then becomes the most important question in the whole issue. Who will pay for that clean-up? Is it feasible, in

Links

[My Facebook Page](#)

[My Home Page](#)

[Tim Brown and Associates](#)

My Headlines

[The Brown Study](#)

["Open Space" and the Banning Ranch](#)

12/2/2011

Yesterday at the Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce Governmental Affairs Committee meeting, our guests were George Basye of Aera Energy...

So far, my job has not gone away

11/3/2011

The fall of each year is a busy time for me because I am an avid supporter of Arizona State...

Seven Days in August

9/3/2011

"Tim! Tim!" I awake wondering who is yelling my name from outside my window. Finally, as I become more coherent...

HEADLINES BY
PETER UHLMANN

Followers

Join this site
with Google Friend Connect

There are no members yet.
[Be the first!](#)

Already a member? [Sign in](#)

Blog Archive

▼ 2011 (5)

▼ December (1)

"Open Space" and the Banning Ranch

► November (1)

the near term, for a non-profit group to raise sufficient funds to purchase the property and then clean it up in our lifetimes? I don't have a crystal ball, but I suspect it would be unlikely. Because I like open space, I would really want to see something done soon so that I might be able to enjoy more open space in Newport Beach while I am still here.

In the current development plan, 25% of the property just under 100 acres would include single family homes, some commercial space and a small resort hotel. The remaining 300 plus acres would be cleaned up, natural resources and habitat restored and maintained as true open space in perpetuity. If this is not a wins-win for those of us who enjoy and appreciate open space, then I don't what is. In the coming weeks and months, we will all be hearing and reading more about this issue. Please don't fall for the emotional appeal of "Keep the Banning Ranch as open space." If we keep it the way it is now, it is the antithesis of open space because it will remain a public hazard and fenced off to all of us who want to see more open space in Newport Beach.

Posted by Tim Brown at 3:11 PM

[Recommend this on Google](#)

1 comments:

 **Dianne Russell** said...

From the Newport Beach perspective it is great. More housing and hotel tax revenues. From the point of view of a Costa Mesa westside resident it is more traffic on our streets and greater potential for the 19th Street bridge to be built. Not a win for us by any stretch of the imagination.

December 2, 2011 3:58 PM

[Post a Comment](#)

[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)

[Subscribe to: Post Comments \(Atom\)](#)